INV

March 25, 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. J. LEE RANKIN, General Counsel

FROM: Howard P. Willens

The attached is one of the specific investigative requests proposed by Messrs. Hubert and Griffin which requires, in my view, further consideration. I am opposed to sending out this request, without further documentation, for the following reasons:

1. I think that we should develop this type of information only if we have some specific allegation regarding travel or contacts by an identified person at a particular time and place which appears possibly relevant to our inquiry. If sufficient information has not been developed in the course of the extensive investigation already conducted to meet this requirement, then I think the probabilities of the additional inquiry yielding information of value are too slight to justify the extensive inquiry proposed. As Messrs. Hubert and Griffin have recognized in their several prior memoranda, this is a problem of balancing considerations. One consideration which looms increasingly large in my opinion is the tentative target date for the completion of this investigation. This is not to state that any meaningful allegation should not be investigated because of time factors. I do feel, however, that the attached does not appear to be based on a meaningful allegation and therefore our limited time and effort should not be expended by projects, such as this, which do not promise to yield very much.

2. If Messrs. Hubert and Griffin were to demonstrate that the materials currently in their possession raise an allegation meeting the above criteria, then I think the way to check the allegation out is to ask the FBI to review the relevant files in the Department of State. Only after this is done should we request original documents from State, in my opinion, unless there is some special reason why the original document is necessary.

Attachment.

I asked for additional examination and photographs. Therefore, considering the inadequacy of the Philadelphia facilities, the unavailability of any closer facilities, and Nicol's desire to return home, I agreed that Nicol could take the bullets and cartridges back to Springfield, although I had originally hoped to keep the movement of the evidence to a minimum.

Around 6 o'clock that day, Jevons of the FBI told me telephonically that the Bureau had completed its examination of the Tippit items. Nicol had a 7 o'clock plane reservation, and Nicol and I immediately left for the Bureau, by cab. While Nicol waited outside in the cab, I went to Mr. Conrad's office and picked up the evidence. I did not take the revolver, because I was uncertain whether it could be taken on a plane, and at any rate I felt that Nicol's examination of the Tippit evidence should parallel his examination of the assassination evidence.